

### REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-28 are pending in this application, with Claims 1, 2, 6, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 23, and 26 being independent.

Claims 2-11, 13-15, and 17-28 have been withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 1, 12 and 16 have been amended. Applicant submits that support for these amendments can be found in the original disclosure, and therefore no new matter has been added.

Claims 1, 12, and 16 have been rejected under 35.U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,504,941 (Wong). Applicant respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons discussed below.

As recited in independent Claim 1, the present invention includes, *inter alia*, the feature of changing a second data group before embedding a digital watermark in the changed second data group, wherein the executed change processing is different for respective users. With this feature, the embedded digital watermark is robust against alliance and average value attacks. Applicant submits that Wong fails to disclose or suggest at least this feature.

According to Wong, the least significant bit (LSB) of an image block  $X_r$  is always set to 0 before embedding a value  $C_r$  in the LSB, regardless of the user. Accordingly, the change to the data prior to the embedding is independent of the user, and Wong fails to disclose or suggest at least the feature wherein the executed change processing is different for respective users.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that the present invention recited in independent Claim 1 is patentable over the art of record. Independent Claims 12 and 16 recite a similar feature and are believed to be patentable for reasons similar to Claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the outstanding rejection, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202)530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. L. Klock', written over a horizontal line.

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